

**THE ALABAMA PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT
FIVE-YEAR PLAN
October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2012**

*The Alabama Public Library Service
6030 Monticello Drive
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-6000*

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Mission statement.....	2
Needs assessment.....	3
Need #1: Strengthen communities.....	4
Need #2: Strengthen information services.....	6
Need #3: Strengthen information technology.....	8
Need #4: Strengthen youth and family.....	10
Need #5: Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within.....	12
State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access	
Evaluation plan.....	13
Stakeholder involvement.....	13
Communication and public availability.....	15
Monitoring procedures.....	16
Certifications and assurances	

INTRODUCTION

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), a federal program for libraries administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), requires a five-year plan from each state. This plan covers the period October 1, 2007, through September 30, 2012, or the federal fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

The Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) was established in 1939 as a separate division of the Department of Archives & History. In 1959 the Alabama Legislature passed an act creating the Alabama Public Library Service as a separate state agency charged with development of a cooperative system of providing books and library service for the various municipalities and counties of the state. Under statute (*Code of Alabama*, 1975, Section 41-8-1- et seq.) the agency is empowered to receive and administer all funds, books or other property from whatever source, under such conditions as may be deemed necessary to carry out the purpose of this article."

Alabama's Demographics

The estimated population of Alabama in 2005 was 4,557,808. In terms of population it ranks at number 23 in the nation. Its growth since 2000 was 2.5 percent while the growth of the nation as a whole was 5.3 percent. Below is a table showing some basic facts about the population as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau:

People	Alabama	USA
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2005	6.5%	6.8%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2005	23.9%	24.8%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2005	13.2%	12.4%
White persons, not Hispanic, percent, 2005	69.3%	66.9%
African American, percent, 2005	26.4%	12.8%
Native American, percent, 2005	0.5%	1.0%
Asian, percent, 2005	0.8%	4.3%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2005	2.3%	14.4%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2005	0.9%	1.5%
Foreign born, percent, 2000	2.0%	11.1%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent age 5+, 2000	3.9%	17.9%

Mission Statement

The mission of the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS) is to provide the services and leadership necessary to meet the educational, informational, cultural and economic needs of Alabama's citizens of all ages by providing leadership, guidance and support for the development and maintenance of local public libraries in funding resources and programs; and through service as the information resource center for state government, including the Governor, the legislature, elected and appointed officials and state employees.

Needs Assessment

APLS will meet its mission using LSTA by addressing five identified areas of need with five corresponding goals. The goals all respond to one or more of the six primary purposes as stated in the LSTA, 20 USC Sec. 9141:

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and
6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

APLS has identified the following five areas of need:

1. Strengthen communities
2. Strengthen information services
3. Strengthen information technology
4. Strengthen youth and family
5. Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access.

The needs were identified by an agency planning committee. The committee started with a wide view of the environment in which the agency and libraries operate in Alabama, while keeping in mind the parameters established by the mission of the agency. It analyzed (a) comments made by stakeholders at town meetings, (b) statistical data about the people of Alabama, (c) the results of two statewide public surveys, (d) statistical data on library usage, (e) the current capacity and strength of Alabama's libraries and library staffs, (f) data about other agencies and community-based organizations, and (g) a white paper prepared by the director of the University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies titled "A White Paper to Inform the Evaluation of the Alabama Public Library Service LSTA Five-Year Plan, October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2007, and to Provide Background for Preparation of the Next Five-Year Plan." The agency director assigned staff members who have the responsibility of continuing to study the library needs of Alabama citizens and who will recommend periodic updating of the needs assessment when required.

Below, each of the five areas of need has its own summary needs assessment, goal, set of LSTA purposes, key output and outcome targets, and program activities.

Need #1: Strengthen communities

Summary Needs Assessment:

- In communities throughout Alabama many residents have a quality of life that is substandard. 15.2 percent of Alabamians live in poverty. The average per capita income and median household income is significantly less than the national averages. The life expectancy of Alabama residents ranks near the bottom nationally, 48th out of 50 states. (U.S. Census Bureau)
- There is much evidence that many citizens of all communities, without regard to size, are not well informed about the programs and services offered by public libraries or about other programs and services offered through state and federal initiatives.
- For communities to become strong, active and growing, their citizens need to be knowledgeable. There is a need for public libraries to be both providers of and a clearing house for programs and services that enhance the knowledge of the citizens.

Goal 1: Strengthen communities by assisting public libraries to: (a) serve as community activity and learning centers, (b) serve as central sources of information about their communities and about community services, (c) partner with other community agencies, institutions, and organizations to improve the quality of life for all of their citizens, (d) cooperate with their local governments and associated agencies to assist in the economic development of their communities, and (e) promote awareness of community services and awareness of the intrinsic value of public libraries. (FY2008-2012)

LSTA Purposes:

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Key Output Targets:

- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2011, with the assistance of the state library 90% of all public libraries shall conduct surveys within their community service areas to discover all of the free community services available through local, state, or federal sponsorship. The surveys shall also determine the criteria required for people to benefit from these services. The libraries shall make the survey data available to their citizens in a manner they deem to be most appropriate.
- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2011, with the assistance of the state library 100% of all public libraries shall collect and analyze data about their libraries' programs and services. This data will be made available to their funding authorities and their citizens.
- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2011, with the assistance of the state library 50% of all public libraries, either independently or jointly with other cooperating libraries or systems, shall create and accomplish programs that advance the knowledge of Alabama's young adults (ages 15 to 21) to better equip them for career employment with earnings well above the minimum wage.

- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2011, 50% of the state’s public libraries which have implemented LSTA-funded projects shall receive support from the state library to promote community-wide awareness and use of the services provided by these projects.
- By year-end FY2011, video/audio telecommunications centers will be established at the state library and at six public libraries at optimal locations throughout the state to facilitate statewide training of public library staff and the dissemination of other knowledge and information. In addition, this telecommunication system will be made available for sharing with (1) local governments and their instrumentalities, (2) federal agencies, and (3) other state agencies.
- By year-end FY2011, 125 persons will have received continuing education training provided under programs developed by public libraries and supported by APLS.
- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012 the state library will provide the following web-based educational services for public library staff corresponding to the LSTA purposes listed on page 4. The services will be provided by (1) community discussion spaces for sharing information, ideas and problem-solving techniques, (2) expanded access to relevant informational resources, and (3) online continuing education, which will especially benefit librarians in rural areas where they do not have easy physical access to training opportunities.

Key Outcome Targets:

- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2011, APLS will provide specialized community training for directors from 35% of the Alabama public libraries. 80% of those trained will indicate on post-training questionnaires that they are better able to communicate effectively with other community leaders, to provide library resources needed to strengthen the community, and to promote awareness of community services and of the library.
- By year-end FY2011, in a statewide random-sample survey of the general public 40% of the respondents will indicate that they believe that public libraries are primary agents in promoting individual and collective growth in Alabama communities.

Program Activities:

TIME FRAME

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Develop and support surveys to be conducted of and by public libraries to discover the availability of free local services. | FY2008-2012 |
| 2. Train public library directors and/or their designated staff and work with them to (a) collect and distribute information about their libraries, (b) help young adults equip themselves to succeed in their careers, and (c) promote awareness of services provided by LSTA-funded projects. | FY2008-2012 |
| 3. Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation. | FY2008-2012 |
| 4. Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons. | FY2008-2012 |
| 5. Support the development of a statewide video/audio telecommunication system for libraries for purposes of training and dissemination of information. | FY2008-2011 |

6. Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff. FY2008-2012
7. Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal. FY2008-2012

Need #2: Strengthen information services

Summary Needs Assessment:

- Alabama is an “information-poor” state based on statistics from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Educational Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics:
 - It ranks 42nd in the country for print materials per capita in public libraries.
 - It ranks 50th for current print serial subscriptions per 1,000 population.
 - It ranks 43rd for video materials per 1,000 population.
 - In 2004 Alabama’s average per capita expenditure for collections in public libraries was only 59% of the national average.
 - Alabama libraries ranked 48th nationally in the number of library visits per capita.
- There is an ongoing need for training public library staff in the LSTA purposes listed below including new concepts and methods in order to provide the best service to the citizens of Alabama.

Goal 2: Strengthen information services through the provision of library materials and informational programs for all Alabamians. (FY2008-2012)

LSTA Purposes:

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.
5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills.
6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 9902(2) of Title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Key Output Targets:

- By year-end FY2011, 40 public libraries will report on their statistical reports to the state library that they offer outreach programs such as services via a library vehicle, deposit collection services, or services for those who cannot readily come to a library (but who either reside or spend time at such

places as an institution, hospital, nursing home, or senior citizen center where the outreach service is offered).

- By year-end FY2011, there will be 4 new library service vehicles serving library users. These vehicles will either add to the current number of vehicles statewide or replace old equipment.
- By year-end FY2011, APLS will have coordinated and presented 20 workshops and institutes for public library staff with an attendance of 500.
- By year-end FY2011, 125 persons will have received continuing education training provided under programs developed by public libraries and supported by APLS.
- By year-end FY2011, 12 persons in the part-time professional training program will have selective assistance in the procurement of education or educational training to better equip them with the skills needed to more effectively serve the citizens of Alabama.

Key Outcome Targets:

- By year-end FY2011, the state library will conduct an online statewide random citizen survey. Respondents will be asked if they or members of their households use public libraries. Those who respond affirmatively will be asked in which of the following areas have their lives or the lives of their household members improved through the use of Alabama public libraries (the percentages of expected affirmative responses are noted for each): (1) Reading skills-50%, (2) Skills for the workplace-30%, (3) Personal enrichment-80%, (4) Community awareness-40%, (5) Computer literacy-30%, (6) Cultural awareness-40%, (7) Foreign language skills-10%, and (8) Parenting skills-15%.
- By year-end FY2011, 90% of a sampling of the users of the services of the APLS Blind and Physically Handicapped Division will indicate in a survey that the special format materials they have used have significantly enhanced their lives, as ranked on a numerical scale.

Program Activities:

TIME FRAME

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Support the strengthening collections for the underserved at the state and local level. | FY2008-2012 |
| 2. Support cooperative library planning. | FY2008-2012 |
| 3. Support information programs and the acquisition of library materials for persons of diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds. | FY2008-2012 |
| 4. Design, coordinate and/or offer workshops and institutes for public library staff on serving patrons with diverse backgrounds and needs. | FY2008-2012 |
| 5. Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama. | FY2008-2012 |
| 6. Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff. | FY2008-2012 |
| 7. Support the acquisition and utilization of library service delivery vehicles. | FY2008-2012 |
| 8. Support information services for the disabled, including: | |
| (a) The acquisition and use of technology to enable library users with | FY2008-2012 |

special needs to access library resources and services.

- (b) The statewide services of the Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of APLS. FY2008-2012
 - (c) Provide deposit collections at convenient locations for library users with special needs. FY2008-2012
 - (d) Training of library staff to improve services to library users with special needs. FY2008-2012
9. Support information services for those having difficulty using a library, including support for outreach programs for such places as institutions, hospitals, nursing homes and senior citizen centers. FY2008-2012
 10. Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons. FY2008-2012
 11. Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation. FY2008-2012
 12. Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal. FY2008-2012

Need #3: Strengthen information technology

Summary Needs Assessment:

- In Alabama public libraries there is a need to upgrade technological equipment and software to improve library automated systems. Most libraries have computers and basic automation for circulation, cataloging and catalog access. But equipment and software upgrades will continue to be necessary as the equipment ages and as new equipment and software is developed and improved by vendors. There is a need to provide the public with the best forms of computer access available.

Goal 3: Strengthen information technology in public libraries by: (1) establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among or between libraries, (2) electronically linking libraries with educational, social, or information services, (3) accessing information through electronic networks, (4) paying the costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunication technologies, (5) paying the costs for libraries to acquire other technologies to record, save and retrieve information, and (6) training library staff and users. (FY2008-2012)

LSTA Purposes:

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

Key Output Targets:

- By year-end FY2011, 20% of the public libraries will have conducted computer training workshops for library users.
- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012 the state library will conduct a survey to determine the state of information technology services at each public library.
- By year-end FY2011 fully complete the union list of materials (STARS) held by Alabama’s public libraries.
- By year-end FY2010 offer 30% of the state’s public libraries 24/7 reference services.
- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012 the state library will provide the following web-based educational services for public library staff corresponding to the LSTA purposes listed on page 8. The services will be provided by (1) community discussion spaces for sharing information, ideas and problem-solving techniques, (2) expanded access to relevant informational resources, and (3) online continuing education, which will especially benefit librarians in rural areas where they do not have easy physical access to training opportunities.
- By year-end FY2011, 125 persons will have received continuing education training provided under programs developed by public libraries and supported by APLS.
- By year-end FY2011, 12 persons in the part-time professional training program will have selective assistance in the procurement of education or educational training to better equip them with the skills needed to more effectively serve the citizens of Alabama.

Key Outcome Targets:

- By year-end FY2011, the state library will conduct an online statewide random citizen survey. Respondents will be asked if they or members of their households use public libraries. Those who respond affirmatively will be asked to answer the following questions (the percentages of expected affirmative responses are noted for each): (1) “Have you heard of the state library’s online databases?”-80%, (2) Those who have heard of the state online databases will be asked “Have you or any household member used the state online databases within the past 12 months?”-30%, (3) “Does the public library used by you or household members have an online public access catalog?”-75%, (4) Those who respond affirmatively to question 3 will be asked “Have you or your household members used the online catalog, and if so was your experience satisfactory?”-80%.

Program Activities:

TIME FRAME

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Strengthen the electronic infrastructure of libraries throughout the state by providing grant funds for technological equipment, software, rapid telecommunications, partnering with other agencies, and upgrading equipment for learning opportunities. | FY2008-2012 |
| 2. Provide funds for resource-sharing, including the following components: 1) statewide materials and document delivery (electronic and physical delivery), 2) databases and 3) electronic interlibrary loan. | FY2008-2012 |
| 3. Provide funds for making technical assistance consulting available to public libraries throughout the state. | FY2008-2012 |
| 4. Provide grant funds for the digitization of library materials for the purposes of preservation and electronic access. | FY2008-2012 |
| 5. Support computer training for library users to help them learn how to | FY2008-2012 |

access information.

6. Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff. FY2008-2012
7. Support the technical training of public library staff for the purpose of operating and maintaining automation equipment and software. FY2008-2012
8. Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons. FY2008-2012
9. Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama. FY2008-2012
10. Support libraries' and library systems' efforts to secure E-Rate telecommunication discounts. FY2008-2012
11. Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation. FY2008-2012
12. Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal. FY2008-2012

Need #4: Strengthen youth and family

Summary Needs Assessment:

- According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, families need an income of about twice the federal poverty level to meet their most basic needs. Children living in families with incomes below this level are referred to as low income. In Alabama 44% of children live in low-income families. Most parents of these children would have to struggle to purchase adequate reading materials for their children.
- In the 2005-2006 school year the enrollment of Alabama public school students in grades K-12 was 742,977. Of these students 385,605 (or 51.9%) qualified for free or reduced-price meals. This data again shows the desperate financial situation faced by many Alabama families. Children in these families face an uphill struggle to attain the necessary literacy and mathematical skills they will need to succeed as adults.
- Alabama adult residents are not as well-educated compared with adults on a nationwide basis. 24.7 percent of Alabama adults have not graduated from high school, compared with 19.6 percent of American adults nationally. 19.0 percent of Alabama adults have a bachelor's degree or higher; whereas nationally 24.4 percent of adults have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Goal 4: Strengthen youth and family by targeting library and information services to: (1) to youth (from birth through 17) in underserved urban and rural communities, including youth from families with incomes below the poverty line, and (2) to the parents and care-givers to improve their child-rearing knowledge and skills. (FY2008-2012)

LSTA Purpose:

6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 9902(2) of Title 42) applicable to a family of the size involved.

Key Output Targets:

- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012, 95% of the public libraries will participate in the annual summer reading program sponsored in part by APLS.
- The number of participants in the Statewide Summer Reading Program will exceed 72,000 by 2011.
- From FY2008 through FY2011, APLS will have funded 72 youth and family projects for individual public libraries.
- By year-end FY2011, 12 persons in the part-time professional training program will have selective assistance in the procurement of education or educational training to better equip them with the skills needed to more effectively serve the citizens of Alabama.
- By year-end FY2011, 125 persons will have received continuing education training provided under programs developed by public libraries and supported by APLS.
- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012 the state library will provide the following web-based educational services for librarians corresponding to the LSTA purpose listed above. The services will be provided by (1) community discussion spaces for sharing information, ideas and problem-solving techniques, (2) expanded access to relevant informational resources, and (3) online continuing education, which will especially benefit librarians in rural areas where they do not have easy physical access to training opportunities.

Key Outcome Targets:

- Each year from FY2008 through FY2012, of the children who have completed grades 3 through 7 participating in the summer reading program, 30% will have read a minimum of six books. On an annual survey of those reading a minimum of six books, (a) 90% will indicate that they liked the program, (b) 95% will indicate that they liked going to the library, and (c) 75% will indicate that the summer reading program helped to maintain or increase their reading ability.

Program Activities:

TIME FRAME

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each year APLS will provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at all participating public libraries at no cost to the libraries. These will include posters, reading logs, bookmarks, and certificates. In addition APLS will provide libraries with an extensive manual of programming and promotional ideas. 2. Increase participation in Alabama’s Statewide Summer Reading Program by expanding the visibility of the program. Methods will include the expansion of partnerships among library systems, public libraries, schools, corporations, the Legislature, and others to improve publicity, promotion, and usage of Alabama’s Summer Reading Program. 3. Support professional training to public library staff in LSTA priority related coursework to enhance service provided to the citizens of Alabama. | <p>FY2008-2012</p> <p>FY2008-2012</p> <p>FY2008-2012</p> |
|--|--|

4. Support programs implemented by public libraries and public library systems for the continuing education of public library staff to improve service to their patrons. FY2008-2012
5. Provide competitive grants to public libraries and to state departments and institutions to provide services targeted to children and youth at risk. These services may include the development of partnerships with other organizations providing services to children such as schools, pre-schools, youth detention centers, youth courts, housing authorities, community services and child-care centers. FY2008-2012
6. Improve the effectiveness of grant projects by providing grant recipients with staff training in LSTA grant project development, implementation and evaluation. FY2008-2012
7. Contract with providers to supply web-based educational services for public library staff. FY2008-2012
8. Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal. FY2008-2012

Need #5: Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry, and the non-profit sector that will result in increased information access.

Summary Needs Assessment:

- Alabama public libraries can better serve the needs of their users by serving as sources of information about state agencies and other community-based organizations.
- State officials and employees can better serve the needs of Alabama citizens by utilizing the information resources available through the state library.

Goal 5: Develop and strengthen partnerships with other units within State government, private industry and the non-profit sector to help provide (1) information and educational resources for public libraries and the people they serve and (2) information for government officials so that they can better perform their work in serving the people of Alabama. (FY2008-2012)

LSTA purposes:

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations.

Key Output Targets:

- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2012, the state library will develop and maintain partnerships with at least 13 departments of the state of Alabama for the purpose of providing information of use to the departments and for the purpose of gathering information from the departments for distribution to all public libraries.

- Between the start of FY2008 and year-end FY2012, the state library will serve as a conduit to public libraries for information of value to citizens from at least 9 departments of the State of Alabama.

Key Outcome Targets:

- By year-end FY2011, the state library will conduct a survey of the directors of Alabama public libraries. Of those responding, 80% will indicate that the information and educational resources received from state departments and other cooperating entities was of considerable benefit to their users.

Program Activities:

TIME FRAME

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The state library will partner with the following state departments and other organizations, as necessary, to provide both government officials and public libraries with information needed to better serve the people of Alabama: (1) Department of Industrial Relations, (2) Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, (3) Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries, (4) Department of Archives and History, (5) Department of Corrections, (6) Alabama Commission on Higher Education, (7) Department of Education, (8) Alabama Emergency Management Agency, (9) Alabama Department of Public Health, (10) Department of Labor, (11) Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, (12) Bureau of Tourism and Travel, (13) Department of Youth Services, (14) Department of Veterans Affairs, (15) Department of Children’s Affairs, (16) the juvenile courts and (17) other public agencies and private organizations. 2. Support other library service programs and projects for the purpose of helping to achieve the above goal. | <p>FY2008-2012</p> <p>FY2008-2012</p> |
|--|---------------------------------------|

Evaluation Plan

To evaluate the success of the activities in meeting identified goals and priorities, APLS will contract with a professional evaluator, who will collaborate with APLS staff to do research and prepare a report on the results and impact of the first four years of the plan. Town meetings will be conducted to which stakeholders will be invited to share their thoughts. Surveys will be conducted of users, the general public and public library staff to measure the effectiveness of programs. Statistical data will be analyzed to measure the degree to which targets have been met.

Summary of Planning and Implementation Procedures

Stakeholder Involvement Procedures

Stakeholder involvement included (a) town meetings, (b) a statewide survey, (c) a planning committee and (c) a steering committee.

The town meetings were conducted both to help evaluate the five-year plan covering FY2003-FY2007 and to gain input for the new plan covering FY2008-FY2012. Town meetings were scheduled for the locations, dates and times reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Town Meeting Schedule

Town	Date	Location	Time
Daphne	June 3, 2006	Public Library	10 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Homewood	June 10, 2006	Public Library	10 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.
Huntsville	June 12, 2006	Public Library	1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Demopolis	June 17, 2006	Public Library	10 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Dothan*	June 19, 2006	Public Library	1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Montgomery	June 21, 2006	APLS HQ.	1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Cullman	June 28, 2006	City Hall	1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

The town meeting invitations were sent by APLS to libraries and municipal and county representatives throughout Alabama. Participants included practicing librarians, members of library boards, municipal officials, State government officials and local citizens.

By far, the greatest number of participants represented directors of public libraries. Thirty-six public library directors attended, accounting for greater than forty percent of all participants. The second most prevalent participant category was library staff, with twenty-five attendees. Finally, ten library board members accounted for just over ten percent of participants. The remaining participants in the town meetings were distributed across several categories including citizens and governmental officials. Table 2 is a summary of participant demographics.

Table 2. Summary of Participant Demographics

Participant Category	Percentage of Participants	Number of Participants
Library Directors	39.6	36
Library Staff	27.5	25
Library Board Members/Trustees	11.0	10
Government Officials (all levels)	11.0	10
Citizens	9.9	9
Unknown	~ 1.0	1
Total for All Categories	~100.00	91

Ten categories were used as “discussion starters” at the town meetings. They were listed on flip charts and provided the organizing scheme for the recording of suggestions from the participants at the meetings. The categories were:

1. Automation & Systems
2. Collaboration & Cooperation
3. Marketing, Public Relations & Communication
4. Materials
5. Programs & Services (other than statewide)
6. Statewide Special Programs
7. Support for Libraries
8. Targeted User Groups
9. Technology Development
10. Training and Education of Library Personnel

Each town meeting consisted of two parts: consideration of progress on priorities from the 2002-2007 plan and development of suggestions and recommendations for inclusion in the 2008-2012 plan. So that participants would be aware of the modified nominal group process to be followed in the meeting, a handout was developed and distributed to all participants at the beginning of each meeting.

After following the process outlined in the handout, new recommendations in each category were ranked. All suggestions were recorded under the ten headings, and the responses were tallied.

APLS has provided for stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Five-Year Plan, and it will ensure that the execution of the Five-Year Plan is coordinated with the overall plan and priorities. APLS will provide additional opportunities for library users to comment on the LSTA Program and its directions. Various APLS committees and task forces may plan and evaluate specific LSTA projects or initiatives.

APLS will continue its practice of holding quarterly library administrators meetings, at which administrators will have ample opportunity to discuss the LSTA program and provide feedback to APLS staff.

During the annual process for developing revised rules for grant applications APLS will solicit feedback and suggestions from the library community for changes in the rules.

The APLS Strategic Planning Committee (consisting of approximately 20 public library directors representing libraries of all sizes and locations) will continue to meet, consider new needs and make recommendations for changes.

During the annual process for developing revised rules for grant applications APLS will solicit feedback and suggestions from the library community for changes in the rules.

APLS has an LSTA Advisory Council appointed by the APLS Executive Board. Its members include 18 persons who are broadly representative of public libraries, school libraries, 4-year college libraries, 2-year academic institution libraries, special libraries, institutional libraries, library users and an ALA-accredited library school. The Council has the following purposes:

1. To advise APLS on the development of the state plan, including the preparation of long-range and annual programs.
2. To advise APLS on policy matters arising in the administration of the state plan.
3. To assist APLS in evaluating library programs, services and activities under the state plan.

The full Council meets quarterly. It has a planning committee, which develops and evaluates the state plan. It also has a rules committee to develop rules and procedures to implement the state plan through grant projects.

Communication and public availability

The purpose of this section is to describe the channels that will be used to communicate to the stakeholders the content of the State Plan and any results, products, processes or benefits. It describes how APLS will make the State Plan readily available to the public and share it with the library community.

APLS will use the following communication channels:

1. The plan itself will be placed on the APLS website. Any Alabamian with Internet access can read the plan or download it and print it at their convenience. If they do not have Internet access at home, virtually all public libraries have it available to the public at no cost.
2. Press releases on the plan will be distributed to newspapers which cover broad geographic areas of the state.
3. APLS publishes on its website a newsletter, *APLSeeds*, in which articles will appear describing a) the content of the state plan, b) the grant application process, c) lists of grant awards, d) the process for revising grant rules, e) announcements of town meetings, f) announcements of library administrators meetings and g) benefits resulting from the State Plan.
4. APLS administers two listservs for library administrators and staff on which the same kinds of information will be distributed as stated above for *APLSeeds*.
5. Information similar to that distributed through the APLS listservs will be distributed through the listserv of the Alabama Library Association.
6. From time to time, the APLS director issues administrative memoranda to library administrators bringing to their attention important matters related to the State Plan.
7. The grant application rules and application forms are also available on the APLS website. Grant applications may be completed and submitted online.
8. Each year APLS staff will conduct grant application workshops at convenient locations throughout the state. The grant rules and application will, of course, be based on the State Plan.

Monitoring Procedures

1. Libraries receiving grants will be required to submit quarterly status reports describing the progress of the project. The purpose is to ensure APLS staff that project goals, evaluation criteria, targets and the timeline result in the desired outcomes.
2. When submitting payment requests libraries may only request funds which can be expended within three business days after receipt of a check from APLS, in compliance with the Federal Cash Management Act.
3. With limited staff, site visits to all projects may not be feasible, but there will be random site visits. Also, monitoring will be done concurrently with APLS staff visits to libraries for other reasons. Further, phone interviews will be conducted with project administrators.
4. A final evaluation report will have the following parts: 1) a description of the extent to which objectives were achieved, 2) a description of specific benefits or outcomes, 3) relevant statistical data, 4) a list of equipment acquired and the cost of each item and 5) a financial report showing actual cumulative disbursements of LSTA funds and required local matching funds.

Monitoring of APLS state-wide projects

1. The APLS business office will be automating more of its functions, and financial monitoring of each statewide project will be continuous as financial data is entered.

2. Data will be kept on all projects. This data will include library materials acquired, program attendance, program evaluations from attendees, program statistical data, site visit data and resource-sharing data.
3. The purpose of the above monitoring is to ensure that project goals, evaluation criteria, targets and the timeline result in the desired outcomes.

Monitoring will comply with federal law

1. If APLS makes a substantive revision to its State plan, the agency will submit to the IMLS Director an amendment to the State plan containing such revision not later than April 1 of the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the amendment will be effective.
2. The State plan provides assurances to the IMLS Director that APLS will make such reports, in such form and containing such information, as the Director may require.
3. APLS will independently evaluate, and report to the IMLS Director regarding, the activities assisted with LSTA funds prior to the end of the Five-Year Plan.